

Report tells status of older women, 1B



Hawks, on top, 1D

Early kindergarten series wrapup, 4A

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## Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item or an idea for a feature story or an action picture with a Farmington-area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

**WHEN** Mother Nature unleashed six inches of snow last week, sales of snow-related products were brisk for Farmington Hills-based ACO Hardware, which has 53 stores in metro Detroit. "Our snow shovels moved very quickly although we still have enough in stock to handle another major snowfall," said Glenn Haegge, corporate spokesman. Ice melt products also sold well. "We're refilling stores weekly," Haegge said.

Snowblower sales are considered only moderate. "We don't handle as many different kinds as some other retailers," Haegge said.

The slowest-moving winter product? Lightweight, heavy-duty nylon shovels. "People just seem more used to the standard metal shovel," Haegge said.

ON the day Michigan celebrated its sesquicentennial, Farmington Hills City Council placed the 150-year-old Harger House, headed to a new location in a residential area along 12 Mile, in the city's historic district.

The house, being moved stone by stone from its original location on Halsted, will be used for offices by new owners Lynn and Donald McCuskey. It will stand next to the historic Pettibone House, 36400 12 Mile, also now used for offices.

Groundbreaking for the Harger House's basement is slated for spring.

**BACK** on the road. Farmington City Council released two taxicab companies last week.

The ABC Cab Co. of Farmington and the Red and Yellow Cab Co. and Suburban Checker Cab Co. of Livonia were relicensed for 1987.

ABC has three bond plates. Northwest, doing business as Red and Yellow Cab and Suburban Checker Cab, has 11.

### HELPFUL hints.

An easy-to-understand booklet about filling out this year's tax forms is available to residents of the 69th District, state Rep. Wilbur Brotherton, R-Farmington, said.

The Michigan Taxpayer's Guide contains information on property taxes, the property tax credit, the Michigan income tax, the single business tax and other tax-related subjects.

The free booklet is available at the Farmington Community Library, Farmington City Hall and Farmington Hills City Hall.

**KEEP** these numbers handy for reference when calling the Farmington Observer: news line, 477-5450; sports line, 591-4312; home delivery, 591-0500; classified ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-2300.

**FOOTNOTES:** One year ago this week — Vandals caused about \$25,000 in damage to a Farmington Hills church Jan. 27. Police plan to file Oakland County Probate Court petitions charging two juveniles, ages 10 and 11, with breaking and entering, said Sgt. Charles Nebus of the Farmington Hills Police Department.

## Uniting Parents are rallying to keep kindergarten in elementaries

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Forces are organizing to oppose an expected mid-February recommendation to the Farmington school board calling for moving kindergartens from elementary schools to centralized early childhood centers.

The group is not disagreeing with some of the district's objectives, organizer and Farmington Hills resident Diane Harnisch said, "but let's have it in our own schools."

Parents are opposed to a "combination of things," she said. "We're upset and we don't find this a viable alternative. They're doing this strictly for overcrowding — not for the kindergartners."

"Everybody wants the local schools. We want a handle with what's going on," she added. "I do not want 4- and 5-year-olds on buses without safety belts, or having to ride an hour each day."

**'We don't think this is beneficial for the children at all. They're (the district) skirting the issue of overcrowding.'**

— Janie Vallett  
Beechview parent

The approximately 100 people who have contacted Harnisch are upset with preliminary reports that a districtwide task force on early childhood education is considering a recommendation to remove kindergarten classrooms from elementary schools and place them in Fairview and Alameda — and possibly a third early childhood center.

ANOTHER TASK force studying

the use of district buildings is trying to find long-term solutions to the growing pains being experienced by the 10,000-student district.

School administrators have said boundary changes made in the past have only been temporary and have not handled the area's current rate of growth.

The building task force is studying uses of current buildings and the possibility of making one an early childhood center.

One local school official wants to see the education and building use issues placed in perspective.

"The concept of early childhood is worth enough of separate attention," said assistant superintendent for special services Mary Lou Ankele. "Facilities are something different. I think people tend to mix the two and tend to get hung up on it — it's clouding the issues."

EARLY CHILDHOOD task force recommendations are expected to be presented to the Farmington school board at a regular board meeting and study session Feb. 17, according to Superintendent Graham Lewis.

The board is expected to receive the recommendations and hear from concerned parents, but will wait several weeks before making a decision, officials said.

Lewis said he has received many telephone calls from parents concerned with a possible kindergarten move.

"We have bunches of parents who are livid," Harnisch added. "I am not a placard-bearing parent . . . but we plan . . . to be en masse at that meeting."

"They need to ask a lot of ques-

## Hills loitering ordinance is strengthened

Committee for the Prevention of Teenage Delinquency meets: 6A.

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington Hills isn't playing anymore.

That's the message city council members sent out Monday with a decision to impose criminal charges against loitering teens — who on second notice or violation — refuse to leave when asked.

One week after adoption of an emergency loitering ordinance, city council members made good on their promise Monday and introduced per-

manent loitering regulations.

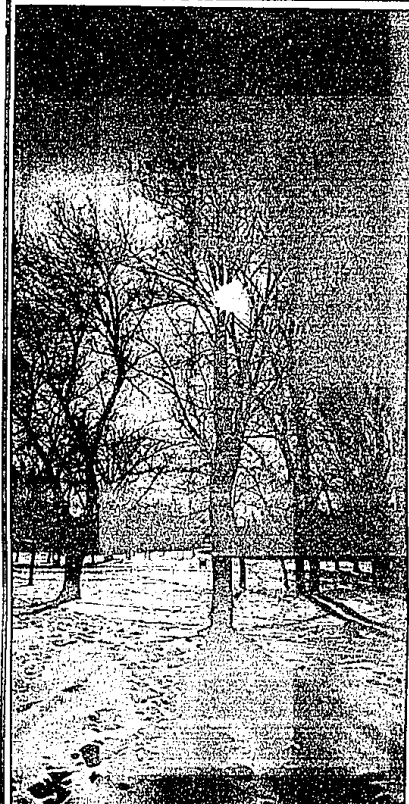
The proposed ordinance strikes a balance — a compromise suggested by Councilman Terry Sever the previous week — with a civil penalty for the first offense and a criminal penalty for subsequent violations.

But the council's decision to impose criminal penalties for a second violation under the proposed loitering ordinance was met with opposition.

Councilwoman Joan Dudley again stood alone in her request to impose only a \$500 civil penalty for loitering violations.

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## Wintry shadows



RANDY DORST/staff photographer

Sunshine cuts through the tall trees to cast long shadows in Farmington's Shawwassee Park, snow-capped and quiet this time of year. There're footprints in the snow — pretty good signs the hardest of souls shrugged off bone-chilling temperatures to enjoy the park's serenity on a sun-splashed winter's day.

## Schools brace for hiring competition

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

The files rumbled over in the Farmington schools personnel office.

And the district's popularity among applicants seems to be the issue, not the department's housekeeping.

With much effort interviewing, and organizing, 489 of the more than

3,000 teachers in the files who have shown an interest in working for Farmington schools have been interviewed and screened since September.

There are still 2,800 to be considered, not including inquiries for teaching aide and secretarial positions.

Districts throughout the state are gearing up for major recruitment

drives with the state's new retirement law allowing early retirement for many school employees. With only 728 teachers on staff in Farmington and 160 substitutes registered, the competition here is fierce, according to educators.

It's Lawrence Freedman's job to sort through the deluge of paperwork and make hiring recommendations. The abundance of applications is "by far the most frustrating" part of the job for Freedman, assistant superintendent for personnel.

FOLLOWING HIS move to the personnel department during the district's reorganization last summer, Freedman talked numbers with the board of education Jan. 20 when he shared his plans for the personnel department.

This department was separated from union negotiation functions in the district during the reorganization. Negotiations continue to be handled by Robert Coleman.

Freedman is seeking quality. "Because they're taught in another district does not mean they're a top notch candidate for Farmington Public Schools," he added.

Employees and job candidates should feel free to come into the district's personnel department with its new structure. "We have initiated an open door policy," Freedman said.

When substitutes have problems, they are coming to Freedman and his staff. "They're not running the other way. Hopefully, this will result in better performance," he added.

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## Michigan's goal: promoting people

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

It was a few short years ago when negative cash balances of \$500 million per day were staring Robert Bowman in the eye.

As the youngest state treasurer in the country at 27, Bowman took Michigan through an uphill battle and onto a path he hopes will make his state the best in the nation.

Today, he enjoys the rewards of \$400 million savings in state coffers and is looking for ways to better use the money — not wondering where his department is going to get its next dollar.

He is credited with bringing the state out of a deficit position, up-



Robert Bowman state treasurer

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He photo

Assistant Superintendent Lawrence Freedman (center) says: "Every substitute teacher in our district is going to be a master teacher . . . they're not going to baby sit."

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